

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SERVICES

Transit and Ridesharing

Virtually all of the Albuquerque metropolitan areas having local bus service at present have densities greater than five dwelling units per acre, with many route portions that travel through even higher density areas. A majority of the area south of Rio Bravo and on the upper slopes of the Southwest Mesa is proposed to be low density residential in the plan, i.e., less than five dwelling units per acre. At today's level of technology, it would not be cost-effective to provide transit service in these low-density areas. Rather, paratransit options might be more effective.

Paratransit is the family of transportation services, which falls between the single occupant automobile and fixed route transit. Conventional fixed route transit service usually means buses traveling on specific streets at regular time intervals. While conventional transit planning tends to be corridor oriented, paratransit services are typically planned to serve subareas, or even single activity centers. Paratransit services are designed to meet specific market needs by utilizing vehicles and travel patterns which are specially tailored to meet the unique characteristics of an area. Alternative paratransit services that continue to grow in popularity are route deviation systems. These systems operate on fixed routes but deviate from their fixed routes to pick up individuals upon request. Guidelines are established that dictate the extent to which a route can be deviated.

This type of paratransit system might be appropriate in low-density areas of the South Valley. The fixed portion of each route, theoretically, would serve at least one area of clustered commercial, office, public service and residential uses such as the historic village centers. Ideally, such routes should be connected with fixed routes to provide for intra-community travel.

Bikeways

The Bikeways Master Plan has bicycle routes programmed or proposed along most of the major streets north of Rio Bravo Boulevard and on Coors Boulevard. Provision for a separated bicycle path the entire length of Unser Boulevard through the plan area is important and should be incorporated into the planning and design of this principal arterial.

Pedestrian travel and wheelchair accessible facilities are recommended throughout the plan area in: (1) the clustering of residential developments, commercial and office complexes, and industrial employment areas; (2) planning and designing the connections of the historic village centers to each other with a continuous open space trail; (3) including open space links and an urban park in the Westgate

Urban Center (4) providing handicapped accessible pedestrian paths or sidewalks in the design of open space trails throughout the plan area; and (5) requiring roads within the plan area to be planned, designed, constructed and improved with the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as a primary concern on those roads where people on foot and bicycles are likely to be.

Equestrians

The rural life-style of the South Valley has encouraged horseback riding for generations. Facilities for the continuation of horseback riding is provided through a network of equestrian trails throughout the South Valley and the Southwest Mesa Slopes. These trails will allow riders to enjoy the views from the Southwest Mesa, ride down the slopes through the South Valley to the bosque to the Rio Grande.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SERVICES POLICIES

QUALITY OF LIFE STATEMENT

We want a proactive public process structured by the historic village areas. This process will seek community input and include open public involvement for envisioning decision-making and implementation. It will empower the community to take responsibility for and help shape the character of the area.

To foster a healthy community, we want services, programs, and educational and natural resources that collaborate to invest in all individuals. We want opportunities to learn, access to health and social care, and public and private services that contribute to the well being of the community.

POLICY 35

The Southwest Area Plan will be evaluated by the County planning staff and the Citizen Steering Committee after adoption to determine its effectiveness in providing comprehensive planning for the southwest area and to determine what dating or amending is necessary.

ACTIONS:

- a) Involve South Valley neighborhood associations and representatives from the seniors, youths, recreation, community groups, developers, landowners, and others in the plan evaluation.
- b) Establish a committee to address historic conservation in the built environment. This committee shall be involved in the preparation and assistance of the Isleta Boulevard Design Overlay Zone or corridor plan. Allow the committee's input in the nomination process when sites are proposed for State and/or National Historic Register.
- c) Establish a committee to address agriculture conservation. This committee shall be involved in developing policies and programs to preserve agricultural lands, as well as prepare and assist the completion of the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment.
- d) Research and examine the possibility of a private sector and/or local community development corporation to implement a local transit system to feed into Sun Tran routes within the South Valley.
- e) Establish a committee to address transportation issues, which shall include, but not limited to trails, public transit and road projects.
- f) Create a committee consisting of community members and landowners to investigate the feasibility of establishing transfer development rights to protect the escarpment and other Open Space and agricultural lands.

"Fairness requires expanding the opportunities for betterment that are available to those communities most in need of them. Fairness requires creating more choices for those who have few. Fairness requires that we reduce inequalities, that we narrow the gap opened by disparities in the distribution of resources."

Author unknown. Planning and Community Equity

POLICY 36

Public and private sectors shall work together to support innovative programs that promote ownership of affordable housing.

ACTIONS:

- a) Require all new development and renovation to implement safety features such as lighting, traffic calming, and locating children's play areas away from busy streets.
- b) Distribute affordable housing equally throughout the County.
- c) Incorporate innovative design for all new public housing.

POLICY 37

Public and private sectors shall work together to aid innovative programs that promote improved community services.

ACTIONS:

- a) Pursue acquisition and development of park sites near the elementary, middle and high schools.
- b) Integrate alternative programs (such as job skills, mentor programs, and other programs for at risk youth) into the public and private sectors, as well as non-profit corporations.
- c) Promote community policing as an alternative to combat crime within neighborhoods. Neighborhood associations and crime watch programs shall be promoted.

- d) Support location of police substations in areas of need, as articulated by the community.

POLICY 38

The County and City shall place delivery and phasing of services to existing communities prior to providing infrastructure to new development.

ACTIONS:

- a) Provide street and transit amenities to the existing historic village centers and the community. These amenities shall provide and improve pedestrian access, and respect the scale and character of the area.
- b) Promote economic development within existing historic village centers and the community. Allow businesses of appropriate scale and intensity to develop in and adjacent to village centers.
- c) Continue efforts in providing sewer systems or alternative systems to existing communities and to promote better environmental conditions, while not exceeding the densities as identified on Map 2.

POLICY 39

The County and City shall work together to adjust boundaries within the plan area in order to facilitate efficient delivery of emergency services and to provide for the basic health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Trends

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) and the City of Albuquerque have put together Urban Growth Projections for Albuquerque and Vicinity for 1999-2010. These projections include information on population, employment, and housing in the Southwest Area Plan.

In the BBER study, the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County area population is projected to grow eleven percent between 1999 and 2010. Most of this projected growth will occur on the west side of the river because of land availability and affordability. Employment growth also is assumed to exceed national rates in that 10-year period. Recent trends have seen that housing development has fluctuated with the ups and downs of the economy due to interest rates and the need for new housing connected with new businesses moving into the area.

Most of the jobs in the metropolitan area are in the service and government sectors and are concentrated east of the Rio Grande. This is reflected in the area within the Southwest Area Plan, where the employment base is small with a concentration of service and government jobs and a dispersed pattern of manufacturing jobs. The area south of Coors, between Rio Bravo and Isleta Pueblo, has maintained a semi rural character with small farms and scattered subdivisions. The South Valley has a higher level of agricultural activity than most other areas of the city. The increase in farming employment by 2005, however, is projected to be very small. In this area, the rising land values puts pressure on farmers to sell their land to residential and commercial developers.

Although, employment is concentrated mostly east of the river, an increasing percentage of new housing is projected for west of the river, mainly due to the availability of inexpensive land in this area. The area between Coors and 98th Street has seen the most growth and is projected to continue.

Economic Development Within the Southwest Plan Area

Residents of the Southwest area have expressed a desire to maintain the rural character of the area while ensuring an economic base for the community to allow its residents to reside close to employment centers. In addition, residents are also concerned about the viability of various levels of agricultural production. They express a desire for jobs, livable wages, and employment opportunities.

Along the Second Street corridor, residents are concerned about groundwater contamination and the destruction of the residential climate. New economic activity in this area should be programmed so it does not add to the contamination in this area. It also should

maintain agricultural and residential use in the area between the Barr Canal and ensure Valley residents the benefits created by employment in this area.

Residents expressed a desire to see the small business sector preserved and strengthened. Others expressed a desire for large retail commercial outlets. The proper location of these sites is critical so as not to interfere with the integrity and character of the area and to provide an optimum location from a land use perspective. Currently, residents must purchase the majority of their consumer goods outside the area. This results in inconvenience to consumers and loss of economic opportunities within the area. Residents expressed a concern that new development on the far western edge of the area may compromise existing natural conditions, drain water resources from the valley, and cause run off and drainage problems. Given the geological conditions in this section of the Plan area, development should be guided so that those issues are integrated into the future development of the area. Environmental issues, such as ensuring a sustainable water supply and minimizing erosion are important to the long-term viability of development. Residents consider the area to be rich in history and this is an important cultural and economic asset that should be preserved.

The Southwest Area Plan addresses issues of how to strengthen the area's economy by building on, and preserving its strengths and resources. The community seeks to meet the retail and employment needs of residents while plugging the economic leaks. Measures to preserve and promote the historic and cultural features of the area while adding economic vitality are essential to the future of the South Valley. Sustainable economic development which benefits local residents by providing employment opportunities and protective measures for the environment are key to this process.

Sustainable Community Development

Job growth in sustainable communities while protecting the environment and building a strong economy have been viewed as mutually exclusive endeavors. This stems from the perception that environmental regulations are a hindrance to a small or large businesses' ability to compete in the local or national economy because they drive up the cost of doing business. Increasingly, though, many economic development professionals have reported that the communities with the strongest long term economic growth are those who pursue sustainable development that balances the resource needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to live and prosper. It has also become clear that a healthy environment can improve the quality of life in a community and region, and healthy communities are attractive places to do business.

Incentives

Enterprise zones are one strategy to reverse urban decline by removing disincentives to the private redevelopment of economically depressed or underdeveloped areas. Depending on the particular enterprise zone program, businesses locating in designated enterprise zones are eligible to receive tax benefits, favorable zoning changes or other incentives to make them economically viable.

Also, small business and public sector incubators are important tools for programming light manufacturing industries, often times allowing for their location in vacant industrial facilities. In this way, business incubators are used to develop new firms at lower start up costs in areas where older industry was once located.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

QUALITY OF LIFE STATEMENT

We want to stimulate economic development, which facilitates the expansion and creation of locally owned businesses, including agriculture and by attracting environmentally safe industries. We want economic development, which creates jobs, diversifies the economic base, enhances and restores resources for generations.

POLICY 40

Encourage the location of newly developing neighborhood scale commercial and office use to be within their defined village centers.

ACTIONS:

- a) Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings for neighborhood commercial uses by providing incentives such as parking space requirement waivers and setback waivers.
- b) Pursue County recognition of historic buildings or landscaped areas by establishing a County landmark program.

POLICY 41

Balance economic development and the quality of life for existing communities as well as for newly developed areas.

ACTIONS:

- a) Create enterprise zones to stimulate balanced economic growth in areas such as, but not limited to, Second Street, north of Rio Bravo and south of Woodward, Broadway Boulevard and Isleta/Bridge Boulevards (boundaries established in the Bridge/Isleta Revitalization Plan).
- b) Promote partnership between the community and the business sector by allowing joint use of public/private facilities, such joint uses could include farmers markets or community entertainment events.

POLICY 42

Industrial development shall be in accordance with existing environmental and geological conditions.

ACTIONS:

- a) Permit industrial economic development where water availability and quality can sustain such industry.
- b) Expect local industry to implement innovative and self-sustaining wastewater disposal and treatment.
- c) Restrict new industrial development in areas of fragile soil conditions or in geographically unfit areas, unless indisputable evidence is presented that the area will not be adversely affected.
- d) Locate industrial development in areas with appropriate road design, drainage and infrastructure conducive to industrial activity.
- e) Limit the scale of industry to an appropriate compatible and sustainable level considering environmental factors such as soil conditions, water availability, air quality, noise and suitable geographical formations.
- f) Develop and enforce performance criteria to guide environmentally responsible industrial development, including criteria on natural resources, development intensity, wastewater facilities, traffic generation, land use compatibility, air quality, noise control and design guidelines.

POLICY 43

Industrial development shall benefit Area Plan residents through community reinvestment efforts such as providing employment to local residents, and building an attractive and competitive business atmosphere.

ACTIONS:

- a) Industry shall assist the community in a long-term capital investment plan for infrastructure that will make themselves and the community more competitive in national and international markets through public and private partnership.

- b) Integrate the participation of industry in workforce development strategies with local community, other businesses, schools and government agencies to promote first source hiring. Expect industry to include specific language in their strategies, plans, proposals and other policy documents regarding local workforce development.
- c) Industry representatives shall work with local vocational/technical schools, universities, colleges and high schools to create a skilled labor force to serve the industry needs and the future emerging employment.
- d) Encourage industries to create and implement apprenticeship programs with local educational systems and Bernalillo County to include programs such as guaranteed first consideration upon graduation.
- e) Encourage industries to form local partnerships with educational and government agencies to address job technology needs of local industry and increase local labor force skills.
- f) Encourage industries to use local suppliers for their manufacturing needs.
- g) Encourage the revision of state and county taxes, which constrain economic development and job creation, e.g. service sector taxes, income taxes and others in order to support local economic development.
- h) Document growth or decline of all county tax revenue by category and site of tax collection in order to track business viability in the plan area.
- i) Establish energy saving criteria for all public infrastructure, buildings and proposed construction projects to assure the least public investment for energy cost, at the onset and over the life of the structure or project.
- j) Support the return of a prescribed portion of property tax and gross receipts tax back to the community of origin for infrastructure and economic development.

POLICY 44

Promote small scale community commercial centers which foster a market place atmosphere; improve profit for small businesses; provide jobs; and circulate dollars within the Area economy to enhance a community environment and meet retail, recreational and service needs of Area plan residents.

ACTIONS:

- a) Create market sectors with tax incentives, low interest loans, etc. for businesses that substantially contribute to a market place atmosphere.
- b) Encourage design criteria, which creates a plaza type market place atmosphere in areas of new development.
- c) Provide tax incentives for businesses, which guarantee local job training and hiring.
- d) Encourage local ownership of businesses within market sector.
- e) Businesses within the market zone will be of neighborhood scale.
- f) Support the establishment and operation of an enterprise development center, to include business incubators to support existing and new businesses, including recommendations for special tax abatements.

POLICY 45

Emphasize job creation and expansion of employment opportunities for the residents of the Southwest Area Plan.

ACTIONS:

- a) Use Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Section 108 funds to create a federally guaranteed loan fund to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects within the Southwest Plan Area.

- b) Base Job Creation Tax Credits and property tax credits to new or expanding companies on the number of new jobs created or retained for the residents of the Southwest area.
- c) Utilize resources and support applications for federal programs and resources such as HUD, CDBG, and Section 108 funds to create a federally guaranteed loan fund; and the Economic Development Administration for grants supporting local economic development initiatives such as economic planning, business incubators, job training, and other programs.
- d) Emphasize community reinvestment as a criteria for tax incentives, for example, local job creation and livable wages.
- e) Link Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) to acquire land, building and/or equipment with certain required outcomes for the Southwest Area community, i.e. job creation, basic health care, livable wages, and career opportunities to ensure social and economic stability in the Area.

POLICY 46

Ensure the availability of land for agriculturally based economic development in the Southwest area.

ACTIONS:

- a) Identify local agricultural resources using the Land Evaluation Site Assessment System to determine suitability of areas and designate those sites for agricultural development.
- b) Assess and rate farmland to update and revise the 1985 Southwest Area Plan Vol. 1 - Existing Conditions.
- c) Preserve suitable agricultural production areas with high potential for economic output using applicable and adopted mechanisms such as agricultural overlay zones, conservation easements, transfer and purchase of development rights, agricultural districting, cluster development, Greenbelt tax assessments, and water trusts.
- d) Adjust Greenbelt criteria to encourage reactivation of suitable agricultural lands that are currently fallow.
- e) Encourage development of structures on land that are not suitable for agriculture.

- f) Discourage the conversion of prime agricultural land along the valley floor zoned A-1, for uses that will endanger water systems, neighboring agriculture, and rural character, i.e. large-scale commercial, industrial and subdivision development.

POLICY 47

Conserve natural resources that are vital to agricultural based economic activities.

ACTIONS:

- a) Promote stability of the environment through aquifer recharge and preventing further air pollution and soil and water contamination.
- b) Protect water rights and water networks from adverse impacts of development.
- c) Foster interagency consensus between Bernalillo County Departments, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and other community agencies such as Community Development Corporations through a joint agreement to regulate and review development and impacts on agricultural land and water.

POLICY 48

Preserve agricultural land along the Rio Grande to prevent further contamination and sustain the Greenbelt.

POLICY 49

Promote and assist the viability of agricultural based economic activities in the Plan Area

ACTIONS:

- a) Promote sustainable economic development ventures that grow from the local agricultural base and assist farmland owners with maintaining and enhancing agricultural activity through tax incentives, cooperative ventures and promotion of agricultural production.
- b) Enhance opportunities for agricultural business activity such as incubators and commercial kitchens through local and regional marketing strategies.
- c) Encourage programs to coordinate the reactivation of fallow farmland to increase farm production.
- d) Encourage local processing to strengthen the Area economy.
- e) Assist in marketing of local agricultural products.
- f) Encourage a "buy local" program.
- g) Promote fair financing and small lending programs for agricultural based economic activities.
- h) Encourage an agricultural cooperative to increase marketing possibilities as well as decreasing the cost of inputs.
- i) Assist in establishing potential markets for local goods, e.g. farmers markets, local food co-ops, health food stores, mom and pop stores, public schools, private schools, colleges, businesses, correctional facilities and restaurants.

POLICY 50

Promote a transitional use of land along the Second Street corridor for the purpose of stimulating economic activity in accordance with residential and environmental needs.

ACTIONS:

- a) Create a transitional use zone as an overlay where appropriate.

- b) Businesses within the transitional use zone should complement each other so as to support self-sufficiency of the Area economy.
- c) Give incentives to local business to locate in the area and/or purchase materials for production from business within the area.
- d) Give priority to businesses headquartered in the Southwest Area Plan boundaries that request license to operate within the transitional use zone.
- e) Uses within the transitional use zone should increase in intensity eastward from the least intense, at the Barr Canal, to the most intense at I-25.
- f) Within the transitional use zone, designate specific land uses that are appropriate for environment and economic development, such as market place and large-scale commercial retail, office and manufacturing.

POLICY 51

Encourage transitional land uses east of Second Street to the San Jose Drain as a buffer to prevent further contamination from heavy industry, and to protect the health and safety of residents, agricultural land, and water table, while promoting diverse economic activity.

ACTIONS:

- a) Encourage and direct C-N, C-1, and O-1 land uses for areas east of Second Street to the San Jose Drain to allow for diverse economic activity.
- b) The County of Bernalillo may provide infrastructure as an incentive for light industrial business and commercial development in the above-mentioned area on a case-by-case basis. These incentives can include fee waivers, a fast track permitting process, provision of limited infrastructure needs and tax rebates for infrastructure costs paid by the developer.
- c) Limit business to an appropriate size and scale in the area east of Second Street to the San Jose Drain between Woodward and Rio Bravo.

- d) Provide incentives, such as infrastructure and tax credits, for heavy industry to develop east of Broadway.

POLICY 52

Preserve the ceja (mesa edge) from Central Avenue south to Rio Bravo Blvd. as open space to protect development below the ceja.

ACTIONS:

- a) Create a transition development area of light impact and limited scale activity, which contours to the ceja open space buffer when development is proposed.
- b) Promote clean and innovative industrial development and commercial activity within the transition area that does not compromise fragile soil conditions.

POLICY 53

Economic development on Central Ave. shall be consistent with objectives in the West Route 66 Sector Development Plan.

ACTIONS:

- a) Promote a positive visual impression along Central Avenue in order to achieve a positive streetscape and quality site design to foster appropriate and compatible adjacent industrial and commercial uses.
- b) Encourage travel-related commercial development on land south of Central extending east from the I-40 and Central interchange.
- c) Encourage C-2 and limited development adjacent to the south side of Central, from 106th Street to the current commercial uses at the I-40 and Central interchange, due to unstable soils and limited capacity for on-site sewer systems.

POLICY 54

Encourage local non-profits to partner with private developers and lending institutions to implement suggested economic development and land uses outlined in policies 44, 48 and 49.

ACTION:

- a) Provide incentives for local non-profits, such as Community Development Corporations (CDC), to receive tax credits and infrastructure to promote conforming land uses; for example, fee waivers, tax rebate of upfront infrastructure costs, and County support throughout the development process.

POLICY 55

Enhance historic village centers (Atrisco, Five Points, Armijo, Pajarito and Los Padillas) with government agencies and/or local non-profits of appropriate scale in order to preserve their character, enhance aesthetic value, sustain local business, and provide residents with retail and public services.

ACTIONS:

- a) Invest in infrastructure for village centers in order to establish a governmental, commercial, and residential mix of neighborhood scale to benefit community needs, such as a post office, health clinic, motor vehicle satellite, small retail, office space, etc.
- b) Promote incentives such as infrastructure and tax credits for small businesses to cluster within historic village centers.
- c) Encourage exterior building design in a manner consistent with the historical character of the area.
- d) Provide tax incentives and assist existing business in and around village centers to renovate and redesign store facades, and rehabilitate older structures and historic plazas.

POLICY 56

Encourage economic development of neighborhood character and scale along Isleta Boulevard consistent with the existing rural/urban mix.

ACTIONS:

- a) Maintain current zoning for business, residential and agricultural lands along Isleta Boulevard.
- b) Establish adequate public transportation for Valley residents.
- c) Maintain low traffic speeds to encourage through traffic to frequent area businesses.
- d) Promote rural and pedestrian friendly design of the Isleta Boulevard business district.
- e) Assist existing businesses along Isleta Boulevard to renovate buildings and redesign facades to attract customers.

POLICY 57

Encourage and support alternative water uses for industrial and commercial sites located on Paseo del Volcan.

ACTIONS:

- a) Encourage industry to implement innovative and self-sustaining wastewater disposal treatment.
- b) Support industrial and commercial developers through tax incentives and IRB's to use alternative water sources rather than drawing from the valley floor.

POLICY 58

Locate future regional commercial activity in designated commercial center sites to meet the retail needs of Area residents while preventing long-term impacts such as excessive runoff or drainage of water from the valley floor.

ACTIONS:

- a) Allow large-scale commercial development west of Coors between Central and Dennis Chavez Boulevard, in areas where transportation conditions will allow for easy access, flow of traffic, and a high level of safety.
- b) Establish concentrated commercial zones on the corner of Unser Boulevard and Dennis Chavez Boulevard (Rio Bravo); 118th Street and Dennis Chavez Boulevard; and the Southwest corner of Dennis Chavez Boulevard and Paseo del Volcan.

POLICY 59

Require that large-scale development adheres to the following criteria to attain a balance between community needs and environmental conditions.

ACTIONS:

- a) Ensure proper drainage specific to the geographic and geological conditions of each site.
- b) Require businesses to utilize conservation and mitigation measures to preserve water quantity.
- c) Require a community impact analysis of proposed large commercial development.
- d) Require an adequate buffer zone between commercial centers and residential areas, such as low impact and neighborhood scale commercial activity.
- e) Encourage development designs that utilize native landscaping, ensure safety, enhance aesthetics, and foster community interaction.

POLICY 60

Commercial, industrial and residential development on Pajarito Mesa shall be discouraged until the forthcoming Pajarito Land Use and Access Study recommendations are completed.

ACTIONS:

- a) Encourage neighborhood commercial development to locate within the Pajarito Village Center.
- b) Encourage large-scale commercial and industrial development to locate in other appropriately designated areas within the plan.